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ISABEL HAMPTON ROBB

**Late Principal of the Training-School for Nurses of the Johns Hopkins Hospital,
Baltimore ; Retiring President of the Trained Nurses'
Associated Alumnæ of the United States**

BY EDITH A. DRAPER

THE subject of the following sketch needs no introduction to the readers of THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING. To adapt the Scripture to our use, we may say, "By her works ye may know her."

Though the country of her adoption has seen her best work, Mrs. Robb is a Canadian born and bred, of English parentage, and for the old home on the other side of Lake Erie a love lingers which will only die out with life itself.

It was in 1881 that Mrs. Robb, then Isabel Adams Hampton, entered the Training-School for Nurses connected with Bellevue Hospital, New York. At that time the schools for nurses were few, and Bellevue held the first place among them. The rapid multiplication that has taken place in the last twenty years is well known, but the choice of schools—now so wide—was then limited to a half dozen or so.

Miss Hampton was below the desirable age, but of such excellent physique and character so formed that youth was more than balanced, and the good judgment of Miss Perkins, then superintendent, was responsible for retaining for Bellevue a name which has brought honor to the old school.

The year following graduation Miss Hampton went to Italy for eighteen months, to nurse in connection with St. Paul's House for Trained Nurses in Rome. During this period newer and wider experiences of many things were gained. The benefits of foreign travel were not lost upon Miss Hampton. Her duties took her to all the principal cities of Italy besides those of Germany and France, and she returned to America in 1885 with ideas enlarged, ambition kindled, and energy



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ISABEL HAMPTON ROBB

Retiring President of the Associated Alumnae of Trained Nurses of the United States

aroused for the accomplishment of work which was to be of lasting benefit to herself and her profession.

Not long after her return from abroad the Illinois Training-School, Chicago, was in need of a superintendent, and the position was offered to and accepted by Miss Hampton. This was an arduous undertaking for so young a woman.

The school was controlled by a board of lady managers, and a yearly contract was entered into with the authorities of Cook County Hospital for the nursing of its wards. The hospital, which was under the thumb of politics, was managed as might be expected. At every annual election every thing and person was demoralized. If elections went contrary to the then ruling party, every employé of the hospital, from warden to cooks, received notice of dismissal, and an annual effort was made to eject the nurses also. But here political influence ceased, and the school was and still is the redeeming feature of an otherwise politically corrupt institution. During Miss Hampton's term of superintendence there several more of the hospital wards were handed over to the care of the nurses, and by her judicious engineering the commissioners were induced to concede many long-needed improvements. At her request in 1888 the nursing in the Presbyterian Hospital was undertaken by the school in addition to that of the Cook County Hospital, and an increase in the staff was necessary, bringing the total of nurses to about one hundred.

Under Miss Hampton's administration the tone of the school was raised. For the first time in any training-school a graded curriculum of study and instruction was planned and enforced, private nursing during training done away with, and many minor improvements made, so that when in 1889 she left Chicago to organize the Training-School at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, the Illinois Training-School was in a flourishing condition, its sphere of usefulness enlarged, and its standing as a first-class training-school unquestioned.

Miss Hampton's work during her five years at the Johns Hopkins Hospital needs little comment: the school speaks for her. Her power of organization had here full play, and the school at once took its stand in the front rank, the many advantages in connection with the Johns Hopkins Hospital enabling Miss Hampton to realize her ideas of reform and make the school the leading one in the path of progress.

The organization and superintendence of this Training-School by no means exhausted Miss Hampton's superabundant energies, and it was during this time the "Principles and Practice of Nursing" was given to the public, a work so well known to all nurses that my unpractised pen need not dwell upon its merits.

In June, 1894, Miss Hampton resigned her position at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, and on July 11 of the same year was married to Dr. Hunter Robb at Saint Margaret's Church, Westminster, London. Since her marriage Mrs. Robb has continued to take the same untiring interest in nursing affairs. The Society of Superintendents of Training-Schools, founded in 1893, owes its existence primarily to Mrs. Robb's enthusiasm and far-sightedness, and to her energy is due the course in hospital economics at Columbia University, where those of the profession aiming at becoming superintendents may equip themselves more thoroughly for responsible and arduous positions.

Neither has her pen been idle, and in "Nursing Ethics" we find that intense and earnest love of her profession which characterizes her whole life's work. No lukewarmness nor half-heartedness would suit her, but with heart and mind, soul and strength, she has devoted herself with singleness of purpose to the task which lay before her.

Since its organization (in which Mrs. Robb took a prominent part) the Associated Alumnae of Trained Nurses has known no other president, and Mrs. Robb's recent resignation of that post is a matter of great regret.

No scheme for the benefit of the nursing profession has been set on foot without Mrs. Robb's hearty coöperation, and although now withdrawing from so much active work in the association, I will venture to state that Mrs. Robb's interest will not wane. "Once a nurse, always a nurse," is most happily exemplified in her career.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By MINNIE D. WILBUR

Chicago

It was just past midnight, and church-bells here and there were sounding out over the sleeping city the birth of another Christmas Day, when a tired and sleepy visiting nurse was roused by a knock on the door.

Throwing on a cloak, she asked, "What is wanted?"

A man's voice answered, "My wife, she needs somebody."

"Have you called the doctor?"

"No."

"Go to the next corner, over the drug-store, the one with the three red lights, ask Dr. Goodspeed to go to your house as soon as he can, then come back here and I will go with you."

Soon the man returned, and they went together down the street. She asked him a few questions, and then they walked on silently.